

January 14 2021

# Black Futures on

# Eglinton

An arts based community cultural mapping study with youth on Black culture, in confront of anti-Black racism



Written and produced by  
CP Planning

In consultation with  
Black Urbanism TO  
and additional leaders, organizations,  
and community members as listed in the  
acknowledgments

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*Click here to see a digital archive of information produced and collected as part of this cultural mapping study*  
Cover Image: notes written by attendees of Reggae Night\*, in response to the question "What does Black culture mean to you?" \*Reggae Night was Black Futures on Eglinton event hosted February 22nd, 2020.

# Section 1: Introduction

## Acknowledgments

This study is a collaboration between CP Planning, Black Urbanism Toronto, and allied community members. We are thankful for funding from the Federal Ministry of Heritage, and the support of many including, but not limited to: the City of Toronto Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit and City Planning Office, the Black Business Professionals Association, the Maria A Shchuka Library staff, Sanique Walters and Alica Hall of the Nia Centre for the Arts, members of the Oakwood Vaughan Community Organization, the offices of councillor Josh Matlow and MPP Jill Andrew, Shannon Holness, Motion, Yonis Hassan, and the Toronto Community Benefits Network. Thank you to all the community residents who participated in this study.

We are grateful for the decades and legacies of advocacy that led to the existence of the Ministry of Heritage's Community Support for Black Canadian Youth program, by which this study is funded. This fund was established due to the Black residents and allies across Canada who advocated many years for the Government of Canada to commit funds in participation of the United Nation's declaration of 2015 - 2024 as the Decade for People of African Descent (DPAD). This recognized decade encourages governments to address systemic anti-Black racism. Canada recognized this decade in 2018, 3 years after it was launched. This recognition happened because the Black community and allies pushed to have it recognized; without this labour it is possible that the Government of Canada may not have committed the funds and this study would therefore not have been possible.

Canada's acknowledgment of the Decade for People of African Descent is of great importance. The Canadian system perpetuates anti-Black racism today and Canadians participated in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Examples of ongoing anti-Black racism are described within this report. They are remnants of unaddressed Canadian cultural biases against Black people.

### **Participation in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade**

Canadians owned enslaved Black people from the 1600s to 1834. In 1799 for example, Torontonians William Jarvis owned 6 enslaved Black people while he was the Provincial Secretary of Upper Canada. Other government and military officials, merchants, fur traders, tavern and hotel keepers, millers, tradesmen, bishops, priests, and nuns also owned enslaved Black people <sup>1</sup>.

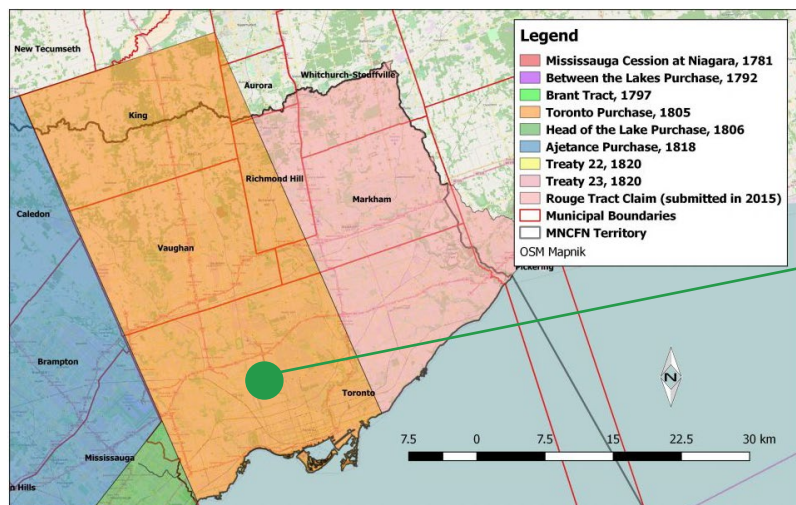
<sup>1</sup>[The Canadian Encyclopedia, Natasha Henry: Black Enslavement in Canada - 2020](#)

# Land Acknowledgment

The lands inclusive of the focus area for Eglinton Avenue West are the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe, the Huron-Wendat, and the Haudenosaunee Nations. In 1805, Treaty 13, also known as the 'Toronto Purchase of 1805' was signed between the Mississaugas of the New Credit, inclusive of Anishinabek communities, and the British settlers. Through this treaty, the British paid the equivalent of a few pounds of bread to purchase 250,000 acres of land including much of the City of Toronto and York Region. This agreement included for the Indigenous Nations to maintain their hunting and fishing rights. The British did not keep their end of the agreement. Only 10 years after the signing of the agreement, the Indigenous Nations were compelled to write a letter pleading for the Queen's support to protect them from the settlers who had prevented them from hunting and fishing <sup>2</sup>.

It is observed that today, the regional economy and government driven cultural relationships with land continue to prevent the Indigenous Nations from practicing their rights included in the 1805 treaty agreement. This is a primary contributor to the hardships experienced by Indigenous people today. This includes that 84% of Indigenous children in Toronto live in poverty, while 15.1% of White children live in poverty <sup>3</sup>.

CP Planning recognizes the impact of colonization on the Indigenous peoples and is committed to the return of their land to them or for them to receive fair and adequate compensation for the lands and rights of which colonization has taken\*. Events were planned to explore local Black cultural relationships with Indigenous peoples; however, due to COVID complications, these events were canceled.



**Municipal Boundaries Related to the Toronto Purchase (1805) and the Rouge Tract Claim (2015)**

The Toronto Purchase, retrieved from <http://mncfn.ca/torontopurchase/>

\*This commitment is in acknowledgment of Indigenous Rights, as noted in Article 28 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

**Focus Area:** referred to in this study as Little Jamaica, and the Eglinton Avenue West neighbourhood and area

<sup>2</sup> [Mississaugas of the New Credit: Toronto Purchase Specific Claim: Arriving at an Agreement - 2017](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Social Planning Toronto: Toronto Child & Family Poverty Report - 2018](#)



# Approach

Black Futures on Eglinton is an arts-based community cultural mapping study aimed at confronting anti-Black racism. It does this using a Black cultural lens to understand the past and future of the Eglinton Ave West neighbourhood area - also known to many as 'Little Jamaica'. This study took place over an 11-month period between September 2019 and August 2020. During this time, those engaged gathered to recognize, build, and share knowledge on the importance of Black culture within the neighbourhood, explore how Black residents shape and are shaped by their environments, and support a culture of engagement in contribution of the neighbourhood's historic appeal. It is recognized by many that socio-economic factors, the LRT's construction, and the BIA's historic poor engagement with Black business owners and operators have lessened the vibrancy of Eglinton Avenue West.

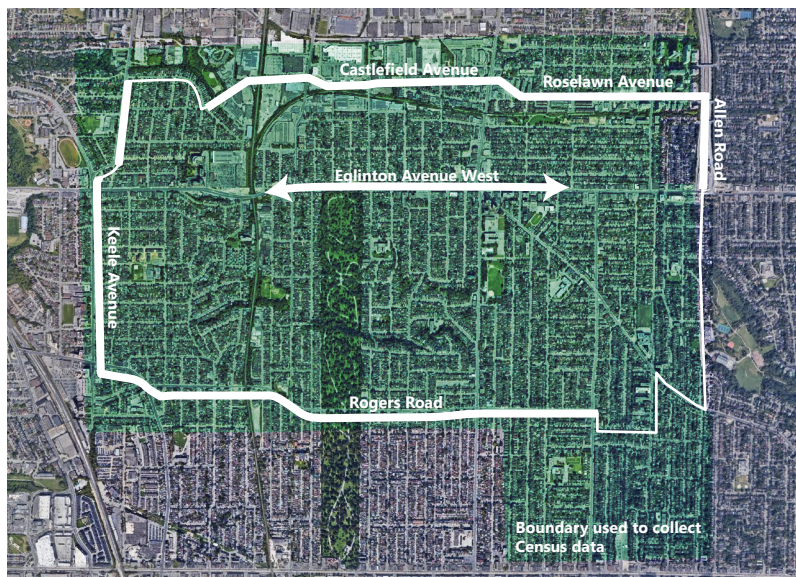
As part of the study, the team and leaders involved in organizing and delivering Black Futures on Eglinton had an intent goal of diverting from common anti-Black practices within community planning. As a result, strategies implemented in this study include:

- hiring Black talent to design and implement the program;
- designing workshops and events to be welcoming and of interest to Black residents;
- partnering with Black led organizations in the design, delivery, and promotion of programming; and,
- asking Black residents what they wanted to see discussed, and designing programming that meet those needs.

## Focus Area

The neighbourhood described in this report includes areas within the boundary of Castlefield Avenue and Roselawn Avenue to North, Keele Avenue to the West, Rogers Road to the South, and Allen Road to the East.

**Census tract codes:** 159.01, 159.02, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 168, 169.01, 169.02, 170, and 171 were used to collect and analyze census data.



Focus area

# What is "Culture"?

Culture is developed through time and practice. The earliest definitions of the term "culture", prior to the 16th century, referred specifically to agriculture. "Culture" was the development and cultivation of crops. Since then, into the 19th century, the term has grown to refer to the cultivation of nations, peoples, and social groups. In particular, their arts, intellect, customs, social institutions, attitudes and behaviours.

**In 2006, the Government of Canada's External Advisory Committee on Cities and Communities identified that culture exists in two forms <sup>4</sup>:**

**cultural processes:** this set of processes include expressions, behaviours, traditions, relationships, and stories of a people or community; and

**cultural objects:** this set of objects includes facilities, spaces, events, and local groups or organizations.

As these forms, culture may exist as an asset or a barrier. Cultural assets are those that help people live vibrant lives, while cultural barriers are those that make access to a vibrant life more difficult.

## Anti-Black Racism is a Cultural Barrier

Anti-Black racism within Canadian and Torontonians culture is a major cultural barrier that makes it difficult for Black residents to live vibrant lives. This includes:

**anti-Black culture, process barrier:** lack of consideration of the unique lived experiences, traditions, and relationships as experienced by Black residents; and relationships that exclude Black residents from participating in and shaping planning processes to reflect their cultural interests, alleviate poverty, improve affordability, and access to program funding.

**anti-Black culture, object barrier:** lack of affordable retail space and affordable housing, property ownership is inaccessible to Black residents, cultural events and landmarks diminish or erase local Black heritage contributions.

After decades of community-led action, the [City of Toronto's Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit](#) was established in 2017. Community action led for this office to have the mandate and support to address the cultural systemic barriers experienced by Black residents. Staff from this office coordinate and collaborate with other City of Toronto staff as well as community organizations to confront these barriers, enhance and develop cultural assets that help Black people live more vibrant lives.

<sup>4</sup> [Government of Canada External Advisory Committee on Cities and Communities: From Restless Communities to Resilient Places: Building a Stronger Future for all Canadians - 2006](#)

## Why Focus on Culture?

Internationally, cultural vitality is understood as the 4th pillar to sustainability - alongside economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental sustainability. This understanding is reinforced at the national, provincial, and municipal levels.

**Federal Background:** In 2006, the Government of Canada's External Advisory Committee on Cities and Communities published 'From Restless Communities to Resilient Places'. This report stated that culture plays the vital role of establishing and maintaining aspects of sustainable communities: civic pride, sense of place, and fostering diversity and inclusion <sup>5</sup>.

**Provincial Background:** The 2016 Ontario Ministry of Heritage's Culture Strategy acknowledges that culture "gives free flight to our imaginations, lifts our spirits, entertains us, gives us hope and inspires us" <sup>6</sup>.

**Municipal Background:** The 2011 City of Toronto Culture Plan notes the role of the city's cultural sector in attracting and retaining talent from around the world <sup>7</sup>.

**Black Futures on Eglinton was funded through the [Canadian Federal Ministry of Heritage's Community Support for Black Canadian Youth program](#).**

**Project Targets and Expected Results are listed below:**

### Targets:

- combat discrimination through awareness raising and/or digital literacy;
- provide opportunities for Black youth, and empowering them through the promotion of Black history, culture and identity; and
- develop leadership skills and civic engagement.

### Expected Results:

- increased awareness of issues affecting participation in society and the economy faced by Black youth;
- increased capacity within the Black community to address discrimination; and,
- increased sense of belonging and pride among Black youth.

<sup>5</sup> [Government of Canada External Advisory Committee on Cities and Communities: From Restless Communities to Resilient Places: Building a Stronger Future for all Canadians - 2006](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Ontario Ministry of Heritage, Sports, Tourism, and Culture Industries: Culture Strategy - 2016](#)

<sup>7</sup> [City of Toronto: Creative Capital Gains - 2001](#)

# What is "Cultural Planning"?

Black Futures on Eglinton takes guidance from "cultural planning" as codified by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture Industries (Ministry of Heritage), and the organizations they've funded to describe the practice. The Ministry of Heritage describes cultural planning as a placed-based approach to identifying and leveraging a community's cultural assets to strengthen all facets of local planning. The aim of this is to integrate cultural considerations into land use planning. This integration, as described by the Ministry, contributes to social development in diversity and inclusion <sup>8</sup>.

## Review Process

The review process includes systemic cultural mapping through research and conversations with residents in restaurants, at events, and via survey. Through these methods participants identified and recorded the community's cultural assets and barriers. Through this process community identified the opportunities, challenges, and strategies required to advance the cultural interests of the community.

## Community Events and Creative Opens

A series of community events and creative opens were held to gather with community and explore cultural interests. They include:

- **Program Kick off** -- January 18th, at the Maria A Shchuka Library
- **Youth Poem Workshops** -- January 30th, February 2nd, and February 6th, at the Maria A Shchuka Library
- **Reggae Night** -- February 22nd, at the Nia Centre for the Arts
- **Creative Writing Workshops** -- February 18th, and 27th, at the Nia Centre for the Arts
- **Lyrics, Libations, and Conversation- Poem Debuts** -- June 22nd, on Zoom
- **Black Futures on Eglinton, Open Call for Poems** -- February 8th-March 8th, and July 15th-August 15th, online submission form

Additional community events were attended as part of this period. This includes the 'Building Community to Fight Gentrification' by the Caribbean Solidarity Network, and 'Open Mic' by Stephan and LillyAnn, both hosted in February.

The creative poems and material produced through Black Futures on Eglinton are in [Section 3 of this report](#) and the Black Futures on Eglinton Poem Book,

<sup>8</sup> [Ontario Ministry of Sport, Tourism, and Culture Industries: Cultural Planning: - 2018](#)



## Survey

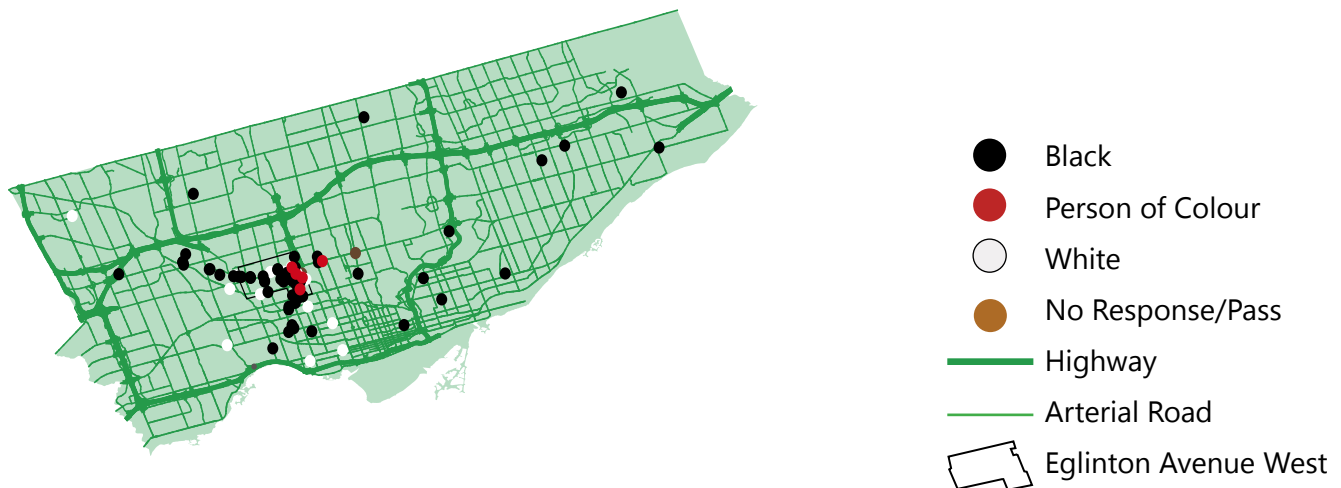
101 residents filled out the Black Futures on Eglinton Culture Survey between November 2019 and March 2020. Survey responses can be viewed in this [Microsoft Excel Workbook here](#). Names and email addresses have been removed from this copy.

Those who filled out the survey came from a diversity of backgrounds. Out of 101 respondents 69 identified as Black, Caribbean or of African descent - of which 38 identified as Black youth age 35 or younger. 6 identified as non-Black persons of colour, and 26 identified as White.

## Census Stats

Population stats and housing data were derived from the 2006 and 2016 Census.

*Chart 1: Location of Toronto Survey Respondents*



*Chart 2: Residency, Survey*

Have you lived in the neighbourhood?	Black	Person of Colour	White	Total
Has lived in the neighbourhood	35 (51%)	4 (67%)	22 (85%)	62 (62%)
Has never lived in the neighbourhood	34 (49%)	2 (33%)	4 (15%)	40 (40%)

Text in these boxes include quotes taken directly from the survey.

### Age, Ethnic and Gender Identity

Due to limited study resources, only a small sample size of residents were reached to complete the survey. As such, there is an expected likely bias in responses, wherein respondents are likely those who practice a higher-than-average level of engagement in community building.

# Section 2: Cultural Mapping

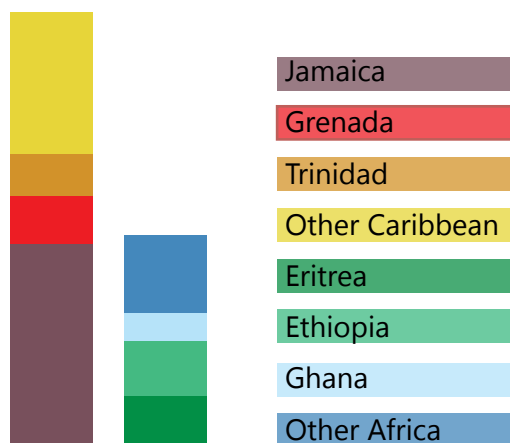
## Stories of Arrival

Stories of arrival are lived experiences that shape knowledge of self and ethnic identity. Altogether, in the Eglinton West neighbourhood there are over 57,687 stories, one for every resident who lived there at the time of the 2016 census. Of these, approximately 6,580 unique stories belong to Black residents. Whether it is that they were born in Canada, or immigrated from another country, each story uniquely contributes to the diversity of the Black community who calls the area home.

Chart 3 represents the most common ethnic origin of immigrants from countries with significant Black populations of residents. In Eglinton West, the most common Caribbean ethnic origins are Jamaica, Grenada, and Trinidad. The top 3 most common African ethnic origins are Eritrea, Ethiopia, and then Ghana.

Black residents are able to enjoy the neighbourhood as one with a higher than average density of Black residents. Benefits of this are described on 12, 13 and 16. Today, there is a higher proportion and density of Black people in Eglinton West than there are in most other parts of Toronto. Proportionally, Black people represent 11% of Eglinton West's total population - 2% more than the 9% average found across Toronto. Density-wise, there are nearly three times as many Black people per km<sup>2</sup> in the neighbourhood than compared to outside the neighbourhood - 914 Black residents/km<sup>2</sup>, in the neighbourhood, while the City average is 382/km<sup>2</sup>.

*Chart 3: Ethnic Origin, Immigrants, 2016 Census*



The Entertainment Kitchen, 1561 Eglinton Avenue West

## Immigration

In the 50-80s, changes to immigration policy led to large waves of Black residents migrating to and settling within the Eglinton West area. The 1955 West Indian Domestic Scheme was the first change to permit Black migration into Canada. This new policy permitted Black women to migrate to work as 'domestic servants'. In the 1960s, Canada removed race, national origin, and colour as reasons to reject an applicant wishing to settle in Canada. This led to record numbers of Caribbean immigrants in the following years <sup>9</sup>.

While immigration picked up in the 50-80s, Black people have lived in the neighbourhood since the early 1900s - this included entrepreneurial couple, Nathan and Goldie Redmon (more about them on page 19).



City of Toronto Heritage Plaque recognizing Eglinton Avenue West's Reggae Roots, 1531 Eglinton Ave. W

<sup>9</sup> Canadian Historical Association - Janes W Walker: The West Indians in Canada - 1984

# Presence in Land and Space

The area is known for its Black population due to the high presence of Black residents in public space and their transformation of space. This is seen in the diversity of residents on the sidewalk and buses that pass through the neighbourhood, the historic events that have happened, and the makeup of businesses on the main street. These factors translate into Reggae music spilling onto the sidewalk, and chatter between residents as they cross paths on their way to visit a friend, barbershop, purchase a patty or jerk chicken, or any other activity. In the survey 25% of Black respondents noted the presence of Black people in public space made them feel comfortable and proud. They noted it as a characteristic of the neighbourhood that they cherish.

"The ability to go there and always find Afro-Caribbean and Caribbean folks more generally being their most authentic selves, largely removed from and outside of the white gaze that makes us change ourselves to perform for others."

**25-35, Black Man**

"Barbershops, the food, seeing Black people 'owning' the space in the summer time. The street vendors, the music. Knowing classic music was recorded there."

**25-35, Black Man**

I cherish... "the Jamaican food, and seeing Black people everywhere, happy."

**18-24, Black Woman**

In 1994, the Junior Carnival changed to take the streets. Children and the community would parade on Eglinton from Dufferin Street to Oakwood Avenue in costume and celebration. Performance in public space further imprinted the Caribbean heritage onto the neighbourhood. By 1998, the popularity of the Carnival grew to attract a crowd of approximately 40,000 spectators lining several blocks of the Eglinton route <sup>10</sup>. A huge boost to the local economy.

Unfortunately, the festivals owners moved it to Scarborough - away from the hub of Black businesses and local communities who enjoyed it. Many hope to see the festival return to Eglinton West.



Kids at Junior Carnival, in Eglinton Ave West, 1995  
Photo - [Simply Shakera](http://SimplyShakera.com) [www.simplyshakera.com](http://www.simplyshakera.com)

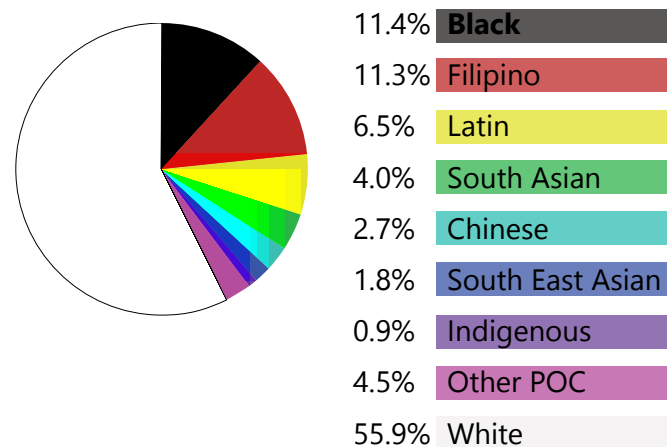
<sup>10</sup> [Jacqueline Taucar: Acting Out\(side\) the Canadian Multicultural "Script" in Toronto's Ethno-cultural Festivals - 2016](#)



## Diversity

While Black residents often visit the area to shop or participate in other cultural activities, the demographic of residents who live in the neighbourhood is very diverse. When asked what they are most proud of or cherish about the neighbourhood, 19% of survey respondents said it was the diversity. 56% said it was the Black business and Black history.

Chart 4: Racial Diversity in Eglinton West, 2016 Census



"Growing up, I was constantly reminded that Black is beautiful. Also, the entrepreneurial successes are most inspiring. "

**25-35, Black Woman**

"I like seeing stores that reflect the unique culture of its residents. Eglinton West was a great example of this. "

**36-60, White Man**

"The diversity, library, salons and Nia Arts Centre."

**36-60, Afro-Indigenous Non-Binary Person**

"Vibrancy, friends, diversity, family, nostalgia"

**25-35, White Woman**



Black Futures on Eglinton Kickoff, at January 18th at the Maria A Schuka Library

"I'm proud that we as Black people have managed to thrive and build businesses in this community despite the gentrification efforts & systemic displacement of our people."

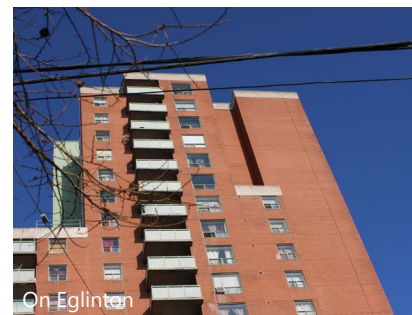
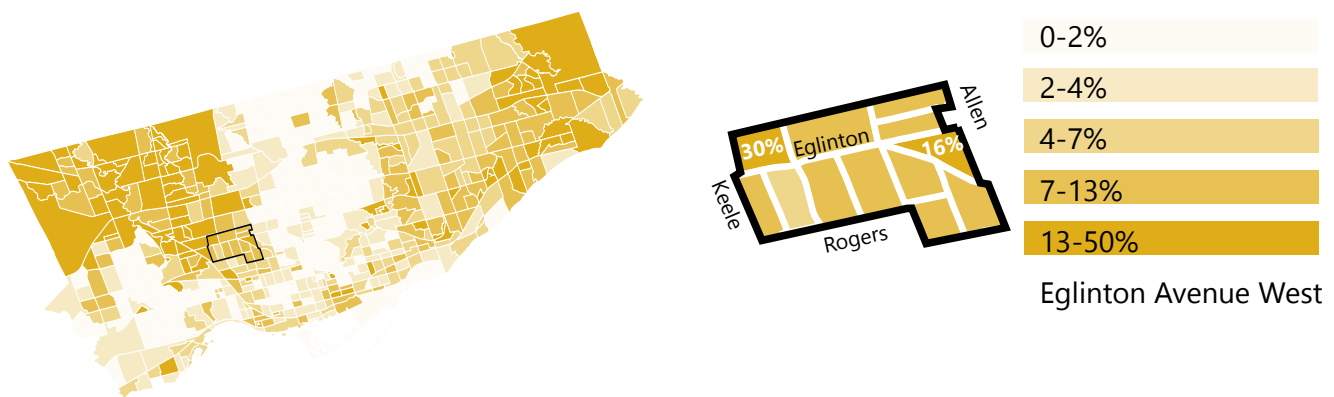
**25-35, Black Woman**

## Housing

Roughly half of all the homes are single or semi-detached homes, while the remaining are a range of duplexes, triplex, townhouses, and apartments of various sizes. Eglinton Avenue West includes apartments over stores, purpose built rental apartments and condos; while the interior of most of the neighbourhood is composed of less dense housing - most typically detached, semi-detached, or duplexes, with few low-rise apartments of 4 storeys or less.

The Eglinton West area is on the boundary between the City's North West quadrant, an area with the highest density of Black residents as a proportion of total population, and the City's centre, the area with the lowest density of Black residents as a proportion of total population.

*Chart 5: Percentage of area Population that is Black, 2016 Census*



Common housing types

Over the study period, community members asked to talk about cultural relationships with land and housing. Through engagements with community on this topic, affordable housing was identified as a priority to explore further. These engagement sessions led to a successful application for funding for the [Tenant Solidarity Program](#). This program includes tenant organizing and supporting the ability for tenants to lead the development of local affordable housing policy.

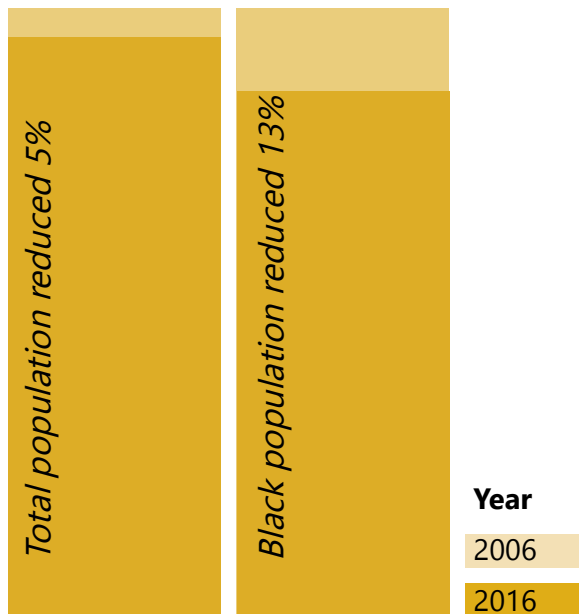
## Population Changes

Recently, the Black population has been moving out of the neighbourhood, and at a faster pace than other ethnic groups that are also leaving. Between 2006 and 2016, the neighbourhood population declined 5%, whereas the Black population declined 13% -- a rate that is nearly 3 times higher. This change may be due to the ongoing gentrification of the neighbourhood; however, further study into this topic is needed to confirm if this is the case.

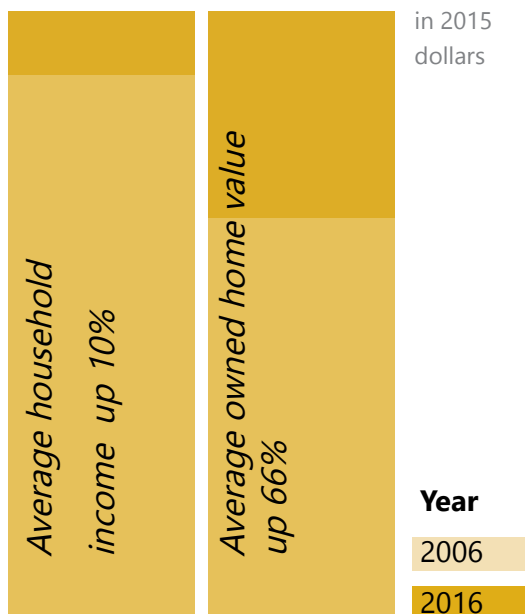
Over the past 10 years, average household income has gone up 10%, while the average home price has gone up 66%. Black people are often overrepresented in lower income households, compared in particular to White people. This is due to systemic discriminations that exclude Black people from higher paying jobs. As a result, in the Toronto metropolitan area, the median after-tax income for a Black person in 2015 was \$26,050 while the median after-tax income for a White person was over \$35,860. In Toronto 26% of Black households own, much lower than the city-wide average of 53% of all households owning<sup>13</sup>. This disparity makes Black people more likely to be displaced through gentrification.

In the survey, when asked what are their top 3 priorities 80% of the respondents said it was housing. This includes the 76% of Black respondents who said the same.

*Chart 6: 2006-2016  
Population Change, Census*



*Chart 7: 2006-2016 Income and Home  
Value Change, Census*



<sup>11</sup>[Statistics Canada: 2016 Catalogue Number 98-400-X2016213 - Income Based on Racial Identification - 2019](#)

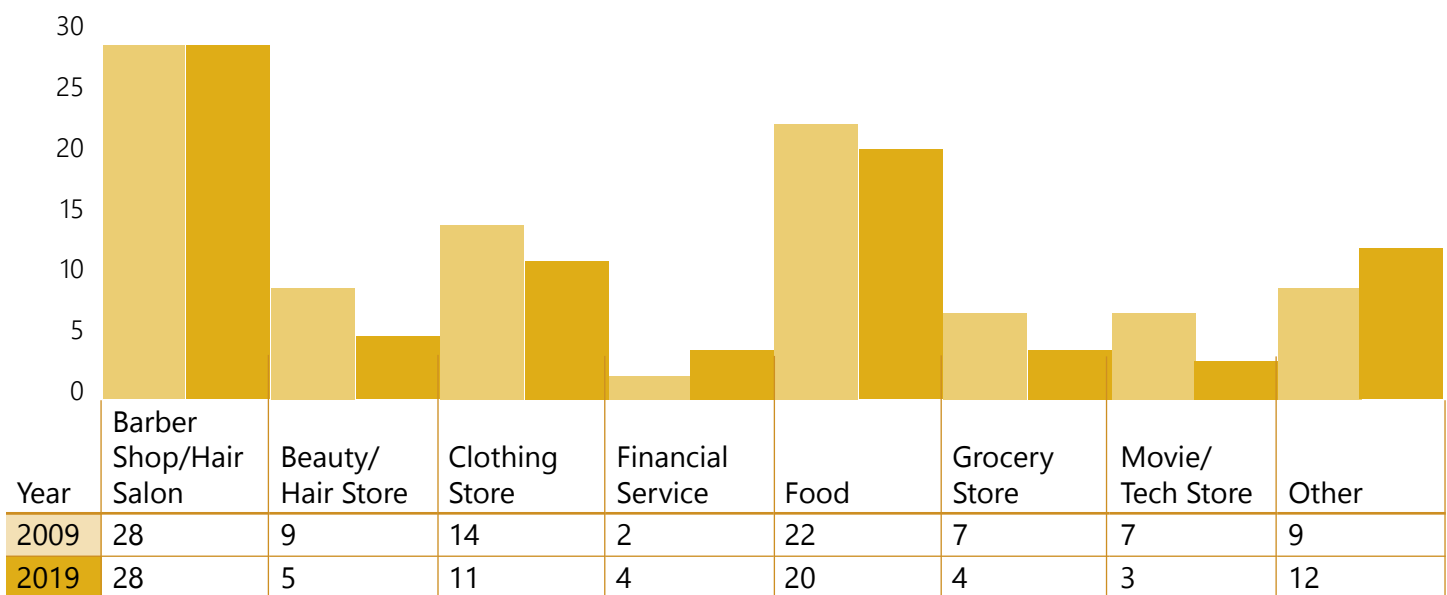
<sup>13</sup>[Centre for Neighbourhood Change: Black Renter Concentration, City of Toronto - 2016](#)

January 29th, 2021 - page updated to source median incomes directly from Statistics Canada rather than the [CTV news article stating to quote Stastics Canada](#). Numbers quoted previously were \$35,000 and \$50,000+; however, news article's link to the Census has broken and therefore not verifiable to the reader what type of income was being quoted (therefore making consistent comparison difficult).

## Retail Businesses

The density of Black businesses in the area contributes to its identity of 'Little Jamaica'. The density of Black businesses is a unique area characteristic. 70% of all survey respondents said that they shop at the local restaurants, 58% said they shop at a store, 38% said they visit to get their hair done, 17% attend a musical event, and 10% attend a sports viewing. While many residents are proud of the Black businesses, between 2009 and 2019 the area has lost approximately 11 Black businesses, declining from 98 to 87\*.

*Chart 8: Number of Black Businesses on Eglinton, Keele to Allen, 2009-2019*



\*This is a rough estimate based off of Google street view information and community knowledge as collected through conversation with residents familiar with the area.

The presence of Black barbershops and Black beauty/hair stores is of great importance to Black residents -- many report traveling far distances, for example, driving from Mississauga to get their hair done and purchase goods here. Barbershops and hair care locations also host social community events. One is the More Than a Haircut community talk series - described further on 26.



Ongoing haircut at Gary's Barbershop,  
479 Oakwood Ave



Trea-Jah-Isles Records, 1514 Eglinton Ave W



## Small Sized Businesses at Risk due to Rising Rents and Redevelopment Patterns

**82%** of survey respondents said preserving the existence of Black businesses on Eglinton is a top priority

The Eglinton Avenue West main street is made up of small-scale businesses which occupy retail stores with frontages of generally 8 metres or less in width. This size allows for a comfortable shopping experience, and for many years has been affordable enough to enable a wide diversity of small businesses to flourish along the street.

While the street has historically been affordable to small businesses this is changing. During a survey of the street, Black business owners noted that some property owners have steadily increased rent - posing a threat to their business' ability to stay in the location. Furthermore, recent applications by private sector developers propose store frontages much larger than the more affordable fine grain scale that exists today. In some cases, their proposals include combining multiple storefronts into a single store front.

The raising rents and redevelopment of property in a style that combines multiple storefronts into a single storefront has led many of the local Black business owners to express that, if patterns continue, they will not be able to stay in the neighbourhood for many more years to come.

If this pattern continues, it will have lasting impacts on the future. During the consultation, Black youth expressed interest in opening their own restaurant on Eglinton. Raising rents diminishes the possibility of today's youth achieving this.

What makes Little Jamaica special to you? "I recall the stores, businesses and owners on Eglinton. The general pulse or ambiance of a relaxed at home feeling of belonging in the area. I believe this may be lost and irretrievable with gentrification on Eglinton."

**60+, Afro-Latino-Bajan Woman**



Barber, Pure Vibes, 1491 Eglinton Avenue W



1676 Eglinton Avenue W



2541 Eglinton Avenue W



Markus Garvey, Treva-Jah-Isles Records, 1514 Eglinton Ave W

Photo: [Yazid Nour](#)

## Community and Media Have Recognized the Eglinton Avenue West Area as "Little Jamaica" Since as Early As 1987

### Canada's Jamaican Son: Track Star Focuses Attention on Blacks

By Herbert H. Denton Washington Post Foreign Service  
*The Washington Post* (1974-Current file); Sep 4, 1987;  
ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Washington Post  
pg. A1

# Canada's Jamaican Son

## *Track Star Focuses Attention on Blacks*

By Herbert H. Denton  
Washington Post Foreign Service

TORONTO, Sept. 3—The mayor of Toronto is fighting with a suburban counterpart over which of them will host the official welcome and ticker-tape parade for Ben Johnson. At Monica's Hair Salon in the "Little Jamaica" section of the city, young women getting their hair done turn to ask anxiously whether proprietor Monica Lewis thinks that the 25-year-old sprinter might notice them when he comes home.

The stunning world record set by Johnson in the 100-meter race at the World Track Championships in Rome Sunday is being hailed here as something of a morality play for the shy immigrant from Jamaica and his de-

feated rival: the brash, flag-waving Carl Lewis, whose cocky manner seems to epitomize what most irks Canadians about Americans.

Johnson's gold medal is the first won by a Canadian in a world championship meet in 55 years, and the pleasure felt here is made even sweeter by the fact that he did it by beating an American. But the outburst of national pride in his victory also has focused attention on the plight of Canadian blacks, many of whom, like Johnson, immigrated from Jamaica and resent what they feel is their second-class status.

"Lewis was pretty and polished in his U.S. national colors," the *Toronto Globe and Mail* chortled afterward. "Johnson

See JOHNSON, A28, Col. 1

■ *Foster, Smith win gold medals at world championships. Page D1*

The Black Business Professionals Association and Black Urbanism TO, among others, hope to see part of the neighbourhood officially recognized as "Little Jamaica" in honour of the area's Jamaican heritage and the people who have called it this for decades.

Communities have expressed that, in the past, the local BIA (led by White property and business owners) has opposed official name recognition.



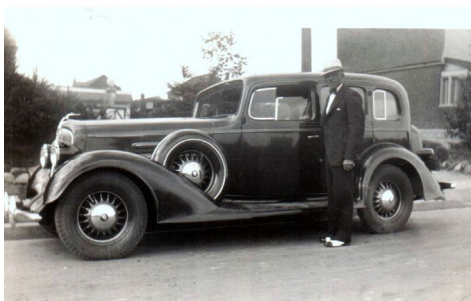
Monica's Hair Salon, 1553  
Eglinton Avenue West



Logo for [The Little Jamaica project](#) by the Black Business Professionals Association

## Eglinton Has Been a Hub of Black Business for Over 100 Years

One of the first Black entrepreneurs in the neighbourhood were husband and wife, Nathan Redmon and Goldie Redmon. Nathan and Goldie arrived in the area in 1913<sup>14</sup>. Nathan was a sleeping car porter, a role that systemic racism limited Black men to while preventing their access to other jobs<sup>15</sup>. In pursuit of better, together, Nathan and Goldie developed Redmon Haulage, a large and successful trucking business operated through their home at 122 Belgravia Avenue (just north of Eglinton, by Dufferin). The couple were able to develop their business to include over 12 active trucks. Nathan was a member of the Truck Owners' Association and the Motor League, and the family engaged in a variety of social activities within and in support of the Black community.



Pictures from left to right: Redmon Haulage sign, Nathan and his car, Nathan and prominent Black business men, Nathan and Goldie Redmon and their children



Photos provided by Bernice Carnegie, Nathan and Goldie's granddaughter

Sleeping car porters attended to passengers on train trips by carrying luggage, setting up beds, pressing clothes and shining shoes, and serving food and beverages, among other services<sup>15</sup>. Black Canadian porters formed the first Black railway union in North America (1917) and became members of the larger Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in 1939<sup>16</sup>. These unions were a necessity due to the fact that the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees (CBRE), the most powerful railway union, only accepted White people as members.

<sup>14</sup> [York Eglinton BIA: Eglinton in Transition](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Human Rights, Travis Tomchuk: Black Sleeping Car Porters - 2020](#)

<sup>16</sup> [The Canadian Encyclopedia, Channon Oyeniran: Sleeping Car Porters in Canada - 2019](#)



# Community Leadership

Black residents participate in festivals and events to indulge in their culture, experiment with expression of their heritage and creativity, and connect with one another to meet a variety of needs. This active shaping of their culture is a core component of building new relationships between residents, supporting the economy, and seeking justice. The landscape of Black-led or serving organizations or events within the neighbourhood reflect the diversity of the neighbourhood. Of the Black survey respondents, about one third or more participated in anti-poverty, food, or music-based events each. These programs represent the cultures of care that are expressed as a cherished element of the neighbourhood.

*Chart 9: Black Participation in Gathering to Build Community, Survey*

Black Participation in Gathering	Black
Anti-Poverty	22 (32%)
Faith	9 (13%)
Barbeques, Food Festivals, and Farmers Markets	27 (39%)
Music Based Festivals	32 (46%)

These events are an important component of developing community leaders. Of the 69 Black respondents, 50% noted attending local events, and 20% noted that they led events. Youth participation was much higher, with 100% Black youth respondents noting their participation and 27% leading.



Stephan and LillyAnn at their Spoken Mind, Body & Spirit community event, February 20th, 2020

*Chart 10: Black Participation in Gathering, Roles, Survey*

Black Participation in Gathering	Attend or Support	Lead	Don't Attend or Support	Total
All Ages	50 (77%)	13 (20%)	16 (23%)	69
Youth (0-35)	26 (100%)	7 (27%)	0 (0%)	26

The [Appendix \(Report Section 3\)](#) includes a list of local organizations and leaders, as shared by respondents of the survey.



## Creative Expression

The arts are important to residents who live in or enjoy the neighbourhood. 18% of survey respondents make music, dance, or create another form of art in the neighbourhood, while 44% attend events to enjoy these creations. Artists noted challenges accessing art performance and production spaces and affordable housing.

On February 22nd, this study hosted Reggae Night at the Nia Centre for the Arts. Here 50 residents enjoyed performance by local Black artists with roots in the neighbourhood. Artists performed a diverse set of music, including jazz, reggae, and fusion. The set was followed by a panel discussion.

Nia Centre for the Arts is a Toronto based non-profit located at 524 Oakwood Avenue, that supports, showcases, and promotes an appreciation of the arts from across the African Diaspora. Founded in 2008, they provide professional development opportunities, youth engagement and exhibition events to connect the community and artists to artistic and cultural experiences.

In 2020, Nia Centre for the Arts began the redevelopment of their space. Once re-opened, it will be Canada's first Black Professional Arts Centre <sup>17</sup>.



Photo: Yazid Nour

Pictures from Reggae Night  
Left: Dijah  
Bottom:  
Jay Douglas (headback), and Danny Saxophone (facing), Dijah (background)



Photo: Yazid Nour



Flyers of LillyAnn, in promo of spoken word event

"Unfortunately, now, the culture of the land is all circulated on money. That is neither good nor healthy. It takes away from our creative spirit. That's part of why I had to leave. It was making me sick."

**Dijah**

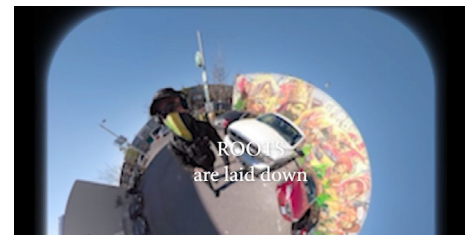
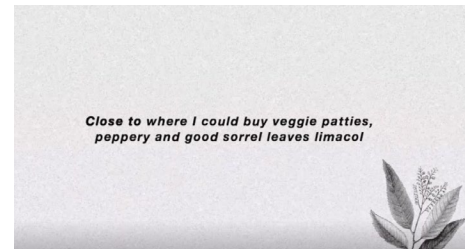
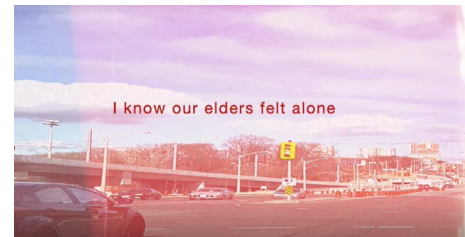
<sup>17</sup>Canadian Art, Connor Garel: [Nia Launches Construction on 14,000Sqft Black Arts Centre in Toronto - 2020](#)

## Expressions Through Poetry

Over the course of this study, residents produced 25 poems about the neighbourhood and their lived experiences as residents. Poems expressed their experiences, the area's history, and their hopes for the future. Themes of Black displacement, property ownership, food, hair, family, and friendship came up. Poems were written by youth attendees of the Maria A Shchuka library youth hub, and by other residents who submitted online. Poets came from a range of ethnic backgrounds.

5 of the produced poems were selected by a panel and transformed into lyrical videos. Poet [Motion](#) provided advice to the artists on spoken word writing and performance; [Khadijah Salawu](#) prepared the lyric videos. These videos debuted at the community event, Lyrics, Libations, and Conversation on Zoom, on June 22nd.

Link to poems and lyric videos included in the Appendix



Lyric videos, from top to bottom:  
\*Ms Faith - Likkle Jamaica's an Experience  
Honey Novick - Darling You are My Shining Star  
\*[Kwame \(Symbolik\) Newman-Bremang](#) - I Am  
\*Hassan Abdallah - Brick by Brick  
\*Shanice Frances - Stella and I  
\*[Motion](#) - Black Future  
\* identifies as Black

## Response to the Eglinton LRT

The Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit (LRT) line is a catalyst for major change in the neighbourhood. This is because the improved transit access increases the overall desirability for living, working, and playing in the neighbourhood. The increased desirability leads to land value increases and new commercial and residential development. Municipal studies in response are detailed on page 24.

How did the community respond to plans, the ongoing and expected land value increases, and new construction? Finding documentation is difficult, as community often do not have the resources to have their voices published in publicly available media. Here however, are two early examples of community responses. In 2014, Pride News Magazine, a Canadian African and Caribbean News Magazine covered community thoughts. They included concerns over coming gentrification. In 2015, the Oakwood Vaughan Community Organization began requesting that the City of Toronto conduct a comprehensive study to ensure housing affordability, economic development, and the protection of socio-economic and racial diversity, among other priority needs. Some successes listed on page 26 and 27.

Quote below was published September 2014, by Pride News Magazine <sup>25</sup>

"I remember walking into the nearby condo developer's sales office to check out what they were up to, and the woman at the front desk told my wife and me that the neighborhood would be changing for the better, not to worry, and I wondered what she meant by that – less Black businesses, more Starbucks and Rexall's, less reggae?"

**Dalton Higgins; a music programmer, pop culture critic, broadcaster, and journalist**

### Quick Facts on the Eglinton LRT

#### First Announced:

2007, by the City of Toronto, as part of Transit City <sup>17</sup>

2008, by Metrolinx, as part of the Metrolinx Big Move <sup>18</sup>

**Funding Began:** 2010 <sup>19</sup>

**City of Toronto studied land use responses to the LRT:** 2012-2014 <sup>20</sup>

**Community Benefits Agreement Signed:** 2014 <sup>21</sup>

**Construction began:** 2016 <sup>22</sup>

**Estimated open:** 2022 <sup>23</sup>

**Length:** 19km, Kennedy to Weston <sup>23</sup>

**Speed:** 60% faster than bus <sup>23</sup>

#### Estimated Ridership:

2031 - 5,500 at peak <sup>24</sup>

max - 15,000 <sup>24</sup>

<sup>17</sup> [Spacing: TTC Announced TRANSIT CITY Plan - 2007](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Metrolinx: The Big Move - 2008](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Metrolinx: Metrolinx Purchases Tunnel Boring Machine for Eglinton Crosstown Project - 2010](#)

<sup>20</sup> [City of Toronto: EGLINTONconnects: Volume 2: The Plan: Recommendations and Implementation Strategies - 2014](#)

<sup>21</sup> [Metrolinx: Metrolinx Community Benefits Framework - 2014](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Infrastructure Ontario: Eglinton Crosstown LRT](#)

<sup>23</sup> [Metrolinx: Eglinton Crosstown LRT - 2020](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Metrolinx: Eglinton Crosstown Backgrounder](#)

<sup>25</sup> [Pride, Neil Armstrong: 'Reggae Lane' To Be Unveiled In The Eglinton Avenue West/Oakwood Area](#)



## History of the City of Toronto: Planning Rapid Transit Along Eglinton, and Planning for Land Use Changes to Respond to the LRT

- **1970s** - Plans for a suspended train network along Eglinton were abandoned <sup>26</sup>
- **1980s - 90s** - Toronto made plans to build a subway along Eglinton, the construction began but then canceled with the hole filled in 1995 <sup>26</sup>
- **2007** - Toronto Council endorsed plans for the Eglinton Crosstown LRT <sup>17</sup>  
*City reports note that the LRT will support urban development that increases transit use, walking, cycling, and will reduce sprawl.*
- **2007 - 2009** - Toronto conducted the Transit Project Assessment in accordance with the Transit Projects Regulation of the Environmental Assessment Act (EA) <sup>27</sup>  
*This included 19 public consultations where over 1,700 residents attended to provide feedback on stop locations and station locations, among other details*
- **2012 - 14** - Toronto conducted the Eglinton Connects study  
*October 12, 2012, Council passed a motion for a planning team to "generate a fresh urban design and land use plan for Eglinton Avenue which respects and provides for all users: pedestrians, cars, shoppers, bikes, trucks, businesses, visitors and residents." <sup>28</sup>. At this time, the vision of the study was for it to guide public and private development and investment. Metrolinx contributed \$1,332,000 over a two-year period to cover staff costs. The intersection of Dufferin Street was identified as a 'Focus Area' <sup>29</sup>. The Final Directions Report includes 21 Study Recommendations. The included recommendations are under the umbrellas of **Traveling Eglinton** (mobility into, and within the area), **Greening Eglinton** (adding trees, green spaces and green connections), **Building Eglinton** (encouraging new mid-rise development, increasing the existence of community service facilities and the existence of street-related retail, and design directions for heritage protections) <sup>30</sup>. The study included 4,000 survey responses, and a cumulative 1,600 attendees at 13 public workshops and open houses <sup>20</sup>.*
- **2019 - 21** - Toronto studying inclusionary zoning  
*Areas of the neighbourhood are considered for inclusionary zoning <sup>31</sup>.*
- **2019 - 21** - Toronto preparing for the launch of a Planning Framework Study and Little Jamaica Cultural District Study  
*These studies will include areas of the neighbourhood, and aim to guide growth*
- **2020 - 21** - Oakwood Avenue will likely be a subject of the Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods projects. <sup>32</sup>  
*This study looks at permitting more townhouses, duplexes, laneway/garden suites, and apartments of 4 storeys or less in Neighbourhoods.*

<sup>26a</sup>. [Transit Toronto, James Bow: Route 5 - the Eglinton LRT - 2020](#)

<sup>17</sup>. [Spacing: TTC Announced TRANSIT CITY Plan - 2007](#)

<sup>27</sup> [City of Toronto: Eglinton LRT Transit Project Assessment - 2009](#)

<sup>28</sup> [City of Toronto: Eglinton Planning Study - Status Report - 2012](#)

<sup>29</sup> [City of Toronto: Eglinton Planning Study - Status Report - Staff Report - 2012](#)

<sup>30</sup> [City of Toronto: Eglinton Connects Planning Study - Final Directions Report - 2014](#)

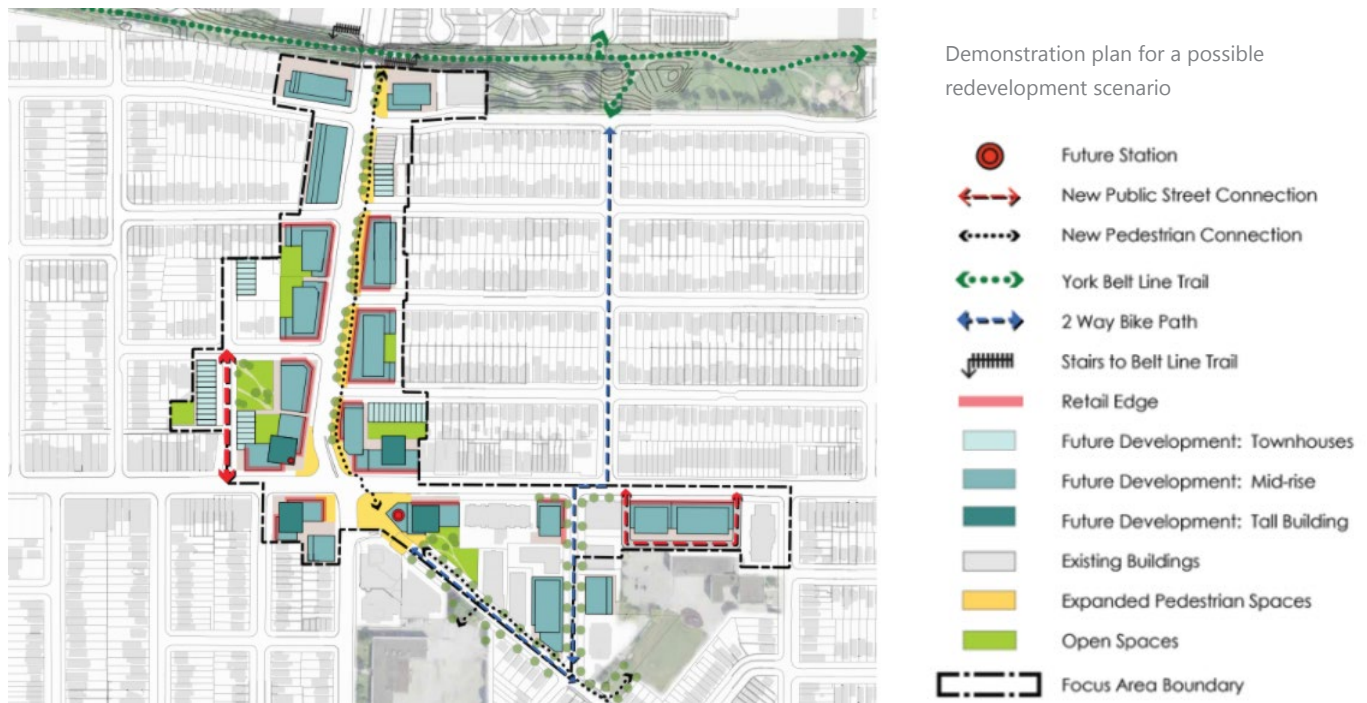
<sup>31</sup> [City of Toronto: Inclusionary Zoning Draft Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment - Presentation - 2020](#)

<sup>32</sup> [City of Toronto: Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods - Presentation - 2020](#)

<sup>20</sup> [City of Toronto: EGLINTONconnects: Volume 2: The Plan: Recommendations and Implementation Strategies - 2014](#)



Text below are lightly edited, for length, extractions from the 'Dufferin Focus Area' section of the City of Toronto's report ['2014 EGLINTONconnects Volume 2 Appendix F: Planning Objectives and Directions for Focus Areas and Mobility Hubs'](#).



## Description

The Dufferin Focus Area includes a number of large underused sites along Dufferin and a fragmented main street type of built fabric along Eglinton. Large lots also present the opportunity to introduce taller buildings, while mid-rise forms can be introduced on smaller, more fragmented lots. Proximity to the Belt Line Trail offers the possibility to create new pedestrian and cycling connections to the Dufferin LRT station entrances. The Dufferin LRT station will also incorporate an existing park and new station plaza, which can be used as a community focus and gathering space.

## Main Objectives/Principles for Redevelopment

- Create better pedestrian connections to Dufferin LRT station entrances
- Create cycling connections to the Belt Line Trail
- Continue the main street character of Dufferin Street and Eglinton Avenue West
- Built form should be predominately mid-rise, accentuated with tall buildings at the intersection and support an increase in the overall
- Future community services and facilities needs include new, non new green and open spaces (including parkland), additional community recreation facilities



All City reports, identified and reviewed as part of the Black Futures on Eglinton Study are found [here](#).

# Recent Successes Through Community Leadership

## More Than a Haircut

Established in 2006, More than a Haircut is a monthly community conversation program that takes place in barbershops on Eglinton and in other neighbourhoods. While cutting hair, boys, young men, and fathers participate in regular facilitated conversations that are oriented towards building community and sharing information on Black masculinity and other topics of importance to the Black community. These conversations are often lively and complement the barbershops natural function as a meeting place for Black men to socialize and bond <sup>33</sup>.

Conversations between the Black Futures on Eglinton study team and More Than a Haircut led to the production of facilitated talks on gentrification and affordable housing. These talks took place in the local barbershops and were led by More than a Haircut.

## Reggae Lane

In 2014, Reggae Lane mural was painted and unveiled, located at the corner of Eglinton and Oakwood. This laneway includes a mural that celebrates the Caribbean music history that sprung out from the neighbourhood over the 50-year history in which Black and Caribbean musical artists have lived in or played in the neighbourhood <sup>25</sup>. The mural was conceptualized and installed through collaborations with Councillor Josh Cole, local and reggae artist Jay Douglas, and others. Once the Eglinton LRT opens, the mural will be moved into the Oakwood Station as a permanent art installation.

<sup>25</sup> [Pride: 'Reggae Lane' To Be Unveiled In The Eglinton Avenue West/Oakwood Area](#)



More Than a Haircut's location, 1543 Eglinton Avenue West



Pure Vibes, 1491 Eglinton Avenue West



Elegance Barber and Salon, 1850 Eglinton Avenue West



B & M Hair Studio, 1567 Eglinton Avenue West

Some locations where More than a Haircut is hosted

<sup>33</sup> [The Macaulay Child Development Centre: More Than a Haircut](#)



Portion of the Reggae Lane Mural



## Shaping Cultural Relationships with Land

Black community members have participated in and led a variety of actions in collaboration with the City of Toronto to direct for a planning process centred on serving the needs of marginalized residents.

## Protecting Black Businesses

On September 30th, 2020, after two years of organizing by Black Urbanism TO (BUTO), and more recent organizing by Reclaim Rebuild Eg West, local Councilor Josh Matlow passed a successful motion with a sweep of supportive items that met many community demands to protect and support local Black businesses. Many of the included items are derived from the community generated report "A Black Business Conversation".

## Maintaining a Community Table to Support Black Businesses and Residents

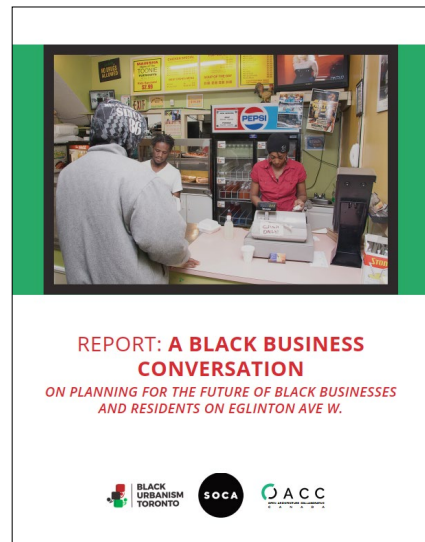
Through the leadership of the City of Toronto's Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit, a diverse network of Black support organizations has gathered to coordinate efforts to meet the ongoing and future needs of Black people.

## Shaping the Narrative

Between 2014 and December 2020, Black residents caring for the community have been featured in events and media 40+ times. Through these engagements residents shared concerns over the lack of planning implemented to prevent the ongoing and growing displacement of Black people and business, as well as to share their vision for a better future. All identified media instances, community events, and reports collected [here](#).

## Advocating for a New Local Community Hub

For many years, the Oakwood Vaughan Community Organization, Oakwood Vaughan Neighbourhood Action Partnership, and Councillor Josh Matlow have advocated for Vaughan Road Academy, an under-enrolled public school with many unused classrooms, to be used as a community hub with programming. On December 16th, 2020, Council passed a motion to, in 2021, pilot the integration of community uses into the building.



Report produced through grassroots organizing



### Black Business Grants for Toronto's Eglinton West

Fundraiser founded by Reclaim Eg West, administered by Black Urbanism TO

Black Urbanism TO and Reclaim Rebuild Eg West are local Black-led organizations with Black youth leadership.

The Oakwood Vaughan Community Organization and Oakwood Vaughan Neighbourhood Action Partnership are a local organization of diverse membership, inclusive of Black residents and leaders.

# Conclusion

The cultural mapping exercise uncovered that the Black community in Eglinton is a diverse network of residents who have access to a variety of cultural assets, and are challenged by a variety of cultural barriers. Residents of various backgrounds have provided insight, through this study, and have identified where cultural processes and objects need to be enhanced or developed, to achieve the desired future on Eglinton. These identified components are summarized into Vision Statements. Recommendations and a list of action items to implement the cultural vision are listed on page 30.

## Cultural Assets and Barriers

The below lists the cultural assets and barriers as identified in this study:

### Cultural Assets

- Asset 1.** Long history in the neighbourhood (since 1913).
- Asset 2.** Local organizations led by or inclusive of Black leaders have experienced recent successes.
- Asset 3.** Passionate and diversely skilled and connected network of Black residents and leaders.
- Asset 4.** City of Toronto is collaborating with Black led organizations to identify needs and activate resources.

When compared to the rest of Toronto

- Asset 5.** The neighbourhood has a higher-than-average density of Black residents.
- Asset 6.** Eglinton has a higher-than-average density of Black businesses.

### Cultural Barriers

- Barrier 1.** Low income of Black residents, relative to others.
- Barrier 2.** Low property/homeownership rate among Black households.
- Barrier 3.** Lack of affordable gathering space.
- Barrier 4.** Identifying and implementing changes to empower Black assets and assets that serve the needs of Black residents and culture is a developing practice - and thus will take consistent attention to stabilize.



Pictured, left to right: Anyika Mark and Dane Williams of Black Urbanism TO, and Butterfly GoPaul of Jane Finch Action Against Poverty

Building Community to Fight Gentrification event by the Caribbean Solidarity Network, February 25, at A Different Booklist



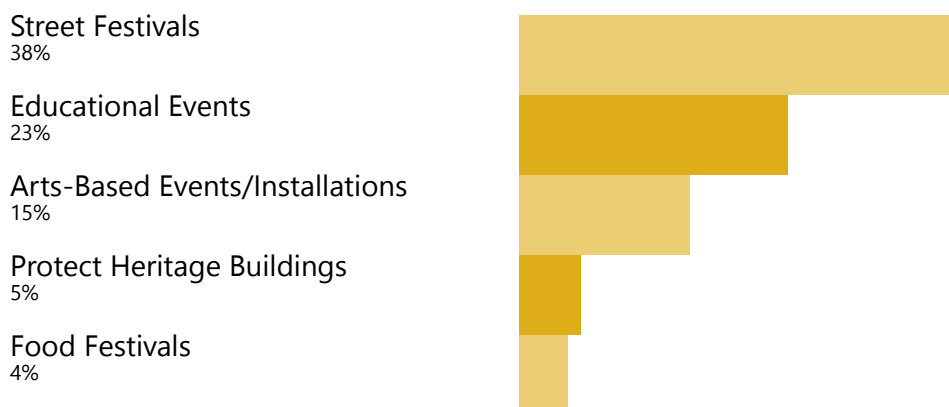
## Cultural Vision for the Future

Over the course of the study, community members shared where cultural processes and objects need to be enhanced or developed, to achieve the desired future Eglinton. They shared via survey, at community events, through conversation hosted in small meetings, and one on one conversations. Their feedback make up the Vision Statements as listed on Page 31. The chart below illustrates the vision as communicated by responses to the survey question 'How can the community demonstrate and celebrate it's heritage and cultural identity?'. The following page includes quotes which generally reflect these categories.

*Chart 11: Vision, Cultural Processes, Survey*



*Chart 12: Vision, Cultural Objects, Survey*



The quotes below, generally reflect the components of the cultural vision for Black futures on Eglinton, as communicated in the survey.

**Strategic Development and Planning 27%**  
**Support Local Black Businesses 22%**

"By not allowing gentrification to buy out everything that made this community the beautiful diverse and safe place it was just 10 years ago when I moved here."

**36 - 60, Caucasian Non-binary Person**

**Invest in Community Relationships 32%**

"...more collaborative programming between art and cultural centres, advocacy groups and local businesses."

**25-35, Angolan Woman**

**Invest in Relationships with City 22%**

"The community has always celebrated its roots. However, given the uncertainty of the area as a continued cultural hub, the City must work along with the community to plan and implement more initiatives."

**25-39, Grenadian and Jamaican Woman**

**Black Community-owned Property 9%**

"... us owning the space and developing it in our image."

**25-39, Black/Afro-Caribbean Man**

**"Telling our Stories" 19%**

"Continuing to make their voices heard on social media, in written and verbal communication and expression of thoughts through visual arts."

**25-39, Middle Eastern Man**

**Street Festivals 38%**  
**Take the Streets 9%**

"Bring back prominent cultural events to the community. i.e. Taste of Jamaica, Kiddie Caribana OR Caribana, Jerkfest."

**25-39, Ghanaian-Canadian Man**

**Arts-Based Events/Installations 15%**  
**Protect Heritage Buildings 5%**

"Legislate to preserve historical sites, cross-cultural and/or Caribbean focused arts programs for youth. Caribbean themed murals in the 3 subway stops along Eglinton West."

**60+, White/European Male**

**Educational Events 23%**

"Regular activities that continue to promote culture, preservation and education. Hosting significant events and gatherings that bring awareness."

**40-60, Eritrean Woman**

## Vision Statements

The Vision Statements below summarize the desired Black future on Eglinton, as described in survey responses, by residents at events and other consultations during this study.

### Cultural Processes

Includes expressions, behaviours, traditions, relationships, and stories of a people or community.

- Vision 1.** Black residents, Black led, and inclusive organizations coordinating together and with government to meet community needs.
- Vision 2.** Black residents being involved in the strategic planning of the neighbourhood.
- Vision 3.** Black residents expressing their needs and interests on media including social media, magazines, blogs, and art.
- Vision 4.** Supporting folks with a vision of maintaining the Black heritage and cultural identity of Eglinton West.
- Vision 5.** The neighbourhood being a welcoming place for Black immigrant communities

### Cultural Objects

Includes facilities, spaces, events, and local groups or organizations.

- Vision 6.** Producing and caring for community owned retail spaces, cooperatives, and gardens.
- Vision 7.** Black residents planning, building, and owning retail and housing affordable to Black residents and provided to Black residents.
- Vision 8.** Returning/hosting Taste of Jamaica, Kiddie Caribana, Caribana, and/or Jerkfest to the neighbourhood.
- Vision 9.** Hosting events and programming that educate Black residents on their heritage.
- Vision 10.** Identifying and preserving sites of heritage value to Black residents.
- Vision 11.** Installing landmark plaques and murals that pay respect to and celebrate Caribbean culture.

In 2019, the City of Toronto officially recognized the United Nations declared Decade for People of African Descent (DPAD, 2015 to 2024) <sup>34</sup>. Their recognition included commitments to adopt initiatives that serve the interests and outcomes of DPAD. Achieving Black futures on Eglinton as described on this page and the Implementation Actions on Page 32 helps the City realize those aims.

<sup>34</sup> [City of Toronto: City Officially Recognizes United Nations' Decade for People of African Descent and Issues Call to Action - 2019](#)

## Vision Implementation

To implement the cultural vision for a Black future on Eglinton, as described on page 31 of this report, it is recommended that the City of Toronto implement the following items within the 2021-2022 year. The implementation of the below is consistent with the Toronto Action Plan to confront anti-Black racism and serves to support the City's achievement of their Action Plan.

**Implementation 1.** Be purposeful about engaging Black residents in work and studies that will shape the culture of the neighbourhood.

- a) *Engaging Black residents ensures community feedback includes a reflection of Black cultural experiences and interests*
- b) *Typically, Black residents have not engaged in local community planning consultations. This is evidenced in the 2016 City of Toronto report which states that the average attendee is a 'White, male, homeowner over the age of 55'<sup>35</sup>. This causes a harmful under-representation of Black community needs/interests, perpetuates the development of policies that contribute to White-supremacy culture, and lessens the development of policies that promote equity.*
- c) *Black residents are more likely to engage in community consultation when outreach is designed to:*
  - i) *target Black residents directly,*
  - ii) *communicate that Black residents will benefit from engagement, or*
  - iii) *ensure Black residents will feel comfortable and welcomed in the space*

**Action 1. 1.** City Council direct that, as part of Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods pilot program, staff to include "Neighbourhoods" for the generation of affordable housing.

**Action 1. 2.** City Council direct that Social Development, Finance and Administration contribute to community efforts to organize and develop tenants associations to confront illegal evictions and poor building management.

**Action 1. 3.** City Council direct for Economic Development & Culture to, with guidance from Black Urbanism TO, prepare a study on the design and implementation of a 'Little Jamaica Commercial Land Trust' fund to be used to purchase and operate commercial retail space for local small Black businesses.

**Action 1. 4.** City Council direct that the Planning Framework Study, Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods pilot study, and an affordable housing study are conducted in coordination with a City-managed community stakeholder working group reflective of the neighbourhood. Working group membership composition:

- an equity-based and representational portion of members identify as Black
- at least 50% of members are renters

**Action 1. 5.** City Council direct that part of the neighbourhood be officially recognized as 'Little Jamaica'

<sup>35</sup> [City of Toronto: Introducing the Inaugural Toronto Planning Review Panel - 2016](#)



*a) Reason*

**Implementation 2.** Provide funding directly to Black led organizations working to maintain and develop community assets that confront systemic anti-Black racism.

*a) These organizations are more attuned to understanding the cultural interests of Black residents, have community trust, be emotionally invested in the well-being of Black residents, and have access to relationships that can be leveraged to accelerate the identification and development of policies that strengthen the cultural assets needed to confront anti-Black racism and achieve the community vision.*

*b) Funding Black led organizations increases the capacity of Black leadership, a cultural asset to the Black community.*

**Action 2. 1.** City Council establish the 'Little Jamaica Commercial Land Trust' fund.

**Action 2. 2.** City Council direct, for the Fairbank Village BIA, York-Eglinton BIA, and Eglinton Hill BIA, for a minimum 30 years, contribute 10%-15% or more of their yearly levy to the 'Little Jamaica Commercial Land Trust' fund.

**Action 2. 3.** City Council to direct for Economic Development & Culture to establish a 1-3% levy on the gross construction cost of new real estate construction in the neighbourhood to contribute to the 'Little Jamaica Commercial Land Trust' fund.

**Action 2. 4.** City Council establish a \$70,000 grant pool available for Black-led organizations to fund new and ongoing community led-work to confront anti-Black racism, build community relationships and coordinate resources to build communal wealth that organize for their needs to be met. Dedicate \$30,000 to go to youth-led initiatives.

**Action 2. 5.** City Council direct Create TO and the Housing Secretariat to identify and dedicate funds and lands to be dedicated to Black-led organizations and partnerships for the production of housing affordable to Black-led households.

Implementation #      Action #

*a) Reason*

**Implementation 3.**      Ensure consultants hired to support the production and completion of community planning or cultural studies in or affecting the neighbourhood include Black leadership and have a reputable history in confronting anti-Black racism.

*a) Black consultants are more attuned to understanding the cultural interests of Black residents, have community trust, be emotionally invested in the well-being of Black residents, and have access to relationships that can be leveraged to accelerate the identification and development of policies that strengthen the cultural assets needed to confront anti-Black racism and achieve the community vision.*

*b) Hiring a Black consultant and Black leaders increases the capacity of Black leadership, a cultural asset to the Black community*

**Action 3. 1.**      City Council request that City Planning retain consultants to conduct a comprehensive strategy that develops policies and programs that coordinate for new real estate development in the neighbourhood to produce, in the neighbourhood:

- affordable housing accessible to Black-led households, and
- secured opportunities for Black and marginalized groups to be gainfully employed in the construction of the new real estate, urban farming of lands, operation, and management of cultural and retail spaces.

**Action 3. 2.**      City Council request that City Planning, with guidance from the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit and Indigenous Affairs Office, collectively retain a consultant who will prepare standardized directions for a report to be submitted by applicants of large development application sites in the neighbourhood. In report, applicant to describe how their development planning and finance process was implemented to confront systemic anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism. This includes the:

- promotion of cultural changes within the construction and finance sector
- design and affordability of any proposed retail spaces,
- affordability of any proposed housing,

**Action 3. 3.**      City motion that City Planning require the above report as part of the pre-application and application process and is submitted to the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit and Indigenous Affairs Office.

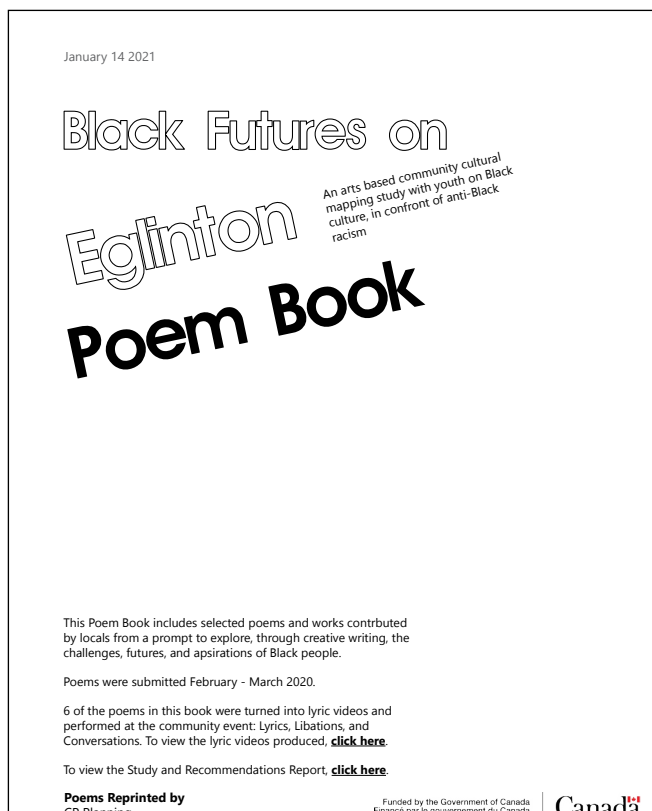
# Section 3: Appendix

## Black Futures on Eglinton Poem Book

Over the course of this program, 25 poems were written about the neighbourhood and its experiences. Poems were written by youth members of the Maria A Shchuka library, and by other members who submitted online. Poets came from a range of ethnic backgrounds. All spoke about their experiences, the area's history, and their hopes for the future. Themes of Black displacement, property ownership, food, family, and friendship came up.

5 of those poems, and the poem produced by Motion, were transformed into lyrical videos, and debuted at the community events, Lyrics, Libations, and Conversations on Zoom, June 22nd 2020.

**To view all the poems and lyric videos, click here.**



## Survey Response: What Local Initiatives do you Find Inspiring?

\*This list only includes names as submitted in the survey. No other scan was conducted. Due to this approach, the list below is an incomplete list of local initiatives

*Chart 12: Inspiring Local Initiatives*

Includes Black Leaders	Name	Category
*	Adornment Stories	Women's Group
*	African Foodbasket	Business
*	Annual Barbeques	Event
*	Antonio's tuxedo store	Business
	Beth Sholom Synagogue's Out of the Cold Programs	Charity
	Beth Sholom Synagogue's Food Bank	Charity
*	Black Daddy Club	Community Group
*	Black Futures on Eglinton	Cultural Mapping
*	Black Urbanism TO	Community Group
*	Black-owned Market	Event
*	CEE	Nonprofit
	Community Accessibility Club	Community Group
	Community Gardening Club	Community Group
*	Eglinton TV	Publisher
	Fairbank Middle School	School
*	For Youth Initiative	Community Centre
*	Growing in Place	Community Organizing
*	Maria A Schuka Library	Library

Includes Black Leaders	Name	Category
*	More Than a Haircut	Nonprofit
*	Nia Centre for the Arts	Community Group
*	Oakwood Vaughan Community Organization	Community Group
*	Oakwood Vaughan Neighbourhood Action Partnership	Community Group
	Parents group	Community Group
	Rawlinson School	School
*	Reggae Lane	Place
	Salsa on St Clair	Event
*	Slam Jam	Event
*	Steve Jame's Friday Night Basketball	Event
	Summer Festival	Event
*	Think2wice	Nonprofit
*	Unison	Health Centre
*	York South Weston Tenants Union	Tenant Rights Advocacy
	Yorktown Neighbourhood Services	Community Centre

"all the young artists in the area who make art and dare to make a living out of it."

**25-35, Black Eritrean Male**



## Survey Response: What Local Leaders do you Find Inspiring?

\*This list only includes names as submitted in the survey. No other scan was conducted. Due to this approach, the list below is an incomplete list of local leaders.

*Chart 13: Inspiring Local Leaders*

Black	Name	Category
*	Alicia Bartholomew	Community Worker
*	Anthony Morgan	Lawyer
*	Antonio's tuxedo store	Business Owner
	Bill Worrell	Organizer
*	Chefs at Randy's Patties	Cooks
*	Chefs of Mainsha	Cooks
	Chiara Padovani	Organizer
*	Dudley Laws	Civil Rights Activist
*	Empara-Siya Gwaan	Artist
*	Dr Jill Andrews	Politician
	Joe Mihevc	Politician
	Lyba Spring	Organizer
*	M. NourbeSe Philip	Artist
*	Marlon Morgridge	Community Worker
*	Ms Mabel	Business Owner
*	Natty B	Business Owner, Trejah Isles
*	Ronald Wisdom	Barbershop Owner
*	Sapphire Chaisson	Community Worker
*	Sharine Taylor	Artist
	Staff at the Maria A Shchuka Library	Staff

Black	Name	Category
*	Valerie Steele	Former President of the Jamaican Canadian Association
*	Yafet Tewelde	Organizer

I'm inspired by "All of the mothers in Little Jamaica. Past and present. They inspire me because since I was little, they were the foundation to the community. They looked out for the entire community."

**25-39, Grenadian and Jamaican Woman**

"I admire the entire community, from the older Caribbean men on the corner selling bootleg CDs and DVDs to the restaurant owners barbequing chicken on weekends."

**25-35, West African and Caribbean Woman**

# Survey Response: What Types of Resources Would Support Culture in the Neighbourhood?

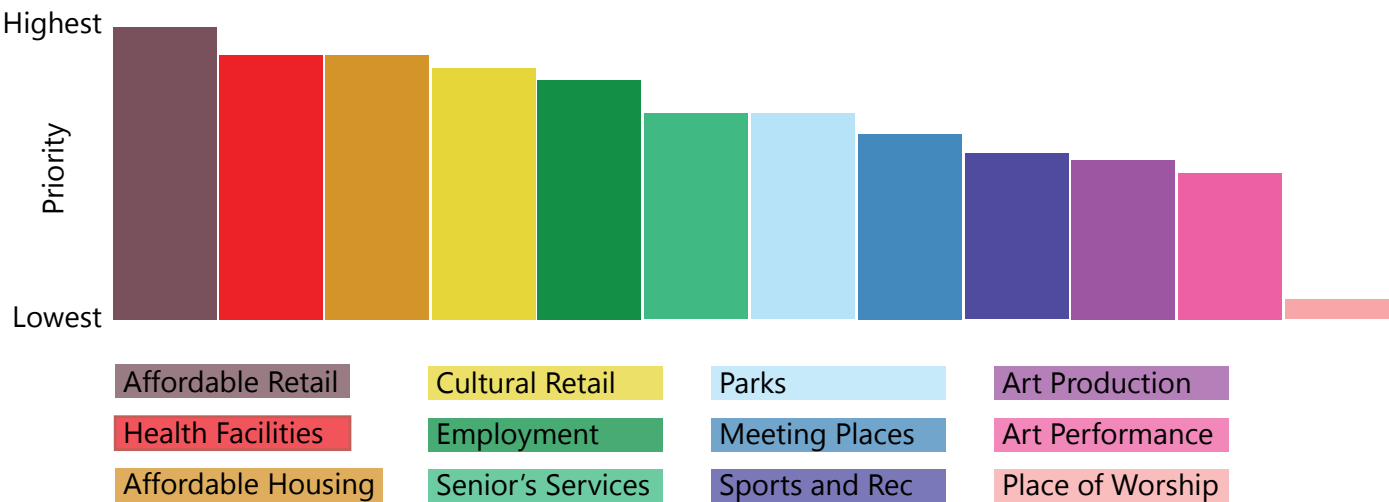
Each value was rated: Very Important, Somewhat Important, Not Important, or of unsure importance. Ratings of very important received 3 points, Somewhat important received 2 points, Not Important received 1 point, unsure received 0 points.

**Points were tallied, and then scored based on the formula below:**

Indicator value-lowest value

Highest value-lowest value

Chart 14: Physical Infrastructure for Culture



## Study Outcomes

The chart below summarizes some of the outcomes of this study against the targets and results provided by the **Canadian Federal Ministry of Heritage's Community Support for Black Canadian Youth program** under which this study is funded.

*Chart 15: Study Outcomes*

	Target	Result
<b>Grant</b>	Combat discrimination through awareness raising and/or digital literacy	Increased awareness of issues affecting participation in society and the economy faced by Black youth
<b>Outcome</b>	There were 120 event participants, 890 instagram followers 547 Twitter followers, and 267 people on the mailing list	Events all shared knowledge of discrimination and efforts to combat it
<b>Grant</b>	Provide opportunities for Black youth, and empowering them through the promotion of Black history, culture and identity	Increased capacity within the Black community to address discrimination.
<b>Outcome</b>	8 Black youth were engaged as members of the 'Emerging Arts Practitioners' team, an additional 15 youth participated in an arts based education poem workshop series, 53 youth responded to the survey, and many of the event attendees, mailing list members, instagram followers are youth, and some poem submissions were from youth.	Youth in the 'Emerging Arts Practitioners' team and the arts based education poem workshop received direct training and guidance in the arts. This includes film, photography, poem writing and reciting. Many of the youth expressed that they felt a boost of confidence from participating.
<b>Grant</b>	Develop leadership skills and civic engagement	Increased sense of belonging and pride among Black youth
<b>Outcome</b>	Youth were directly involved in steering this study. This includes Cheryll Case and Anyika Mark, two young Black women who developed and delivered the arts based education poem workshop series, Reggae Night, and other activities. There are many examples of leadership development within the 'Emerging Arts Practitioners' team, workshop series, and participants. A fun one, is when two local Black musicians performed songs and then, as panelists, shared their thoughts on civic needs to an audience of 50+	<p>The events were very successful, and participants often lingered after the event was announced 'over'. They were enthusiastic to share their thoughts, and they were excited to see work happening in the community to bring attention to needs and opportunities to address ongoing systemic discrimination.</p> <p>This result is observed also in the survey responses. Many respondents shared that they were proud to see what the Black Futures on Eglinton was doing.</p>



**Contact:** CPplanning.ca // Cheryll Case, Founder and Principal Urban Planner of CP Planning  
Case.Cheryll@gmail.com

Team Members: Cheryll Case - Urban Planner, Project Management; Anyika Mark - Community Integration; Jasmine Mohamed - Research and co-editing; Alexander 'AJ' Bimm - Research, photography & co-editing; Amina Ali - Community Outreach; Claudia Pensa Bowen - Community Outreach; Valeria Amponsah - Community Outreach; Ayat Salih - Community Outreach; Yazid Nour - Photography; Zabrina Dacres - Photography